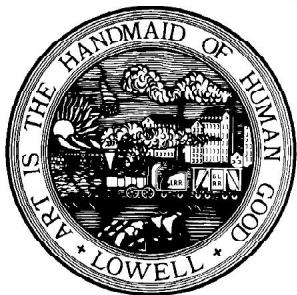


COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN



EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT



City of Lowell, Massachusetts



February 2002

Prepared by:

THE CITY OF LOWELL DIVISION OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

and

THE CITY OF LOWELL PLANNING BOARD

John F. Cox, City Manager



CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1 THE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN	3
1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS	3
1.3 REGIONAL CONTEXT	4
1.4 HISTORY	4
2.0 DEMOGRAPHICS.....	6
2.1 HISTORIC TRENDS	6
2.2 POPULATION & DENSITY	7
2.3 MORTALITY, FERTILITY & MIGRATION	7
2.4 RACE & MINORITY TRENDS	8
2.5 AGE	8
2.6 INCOME TRENDS.....	9
2.7 DEMOGRAPHIC TABLES	9
3.0 LAND-USE.....	19
3.1 ZONING REGULATION	19
3.2 SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS	20
3.3 SITE PLAN REVIEW	20
3.4 LOWELL HISTORIC BOARD	21
3.5 LAND USE INVENTORY	21
4.0 BUILD-OUT.....	29
4.1 METHODOLOGY.....	29
4.2 CONCLUSIONS	30
5.0 TRANSPORTATION & PARKING.....	34
5.1 CLASSIFICATION OF STREETS	34
5.2 TRAFFIC VOLUME STUDY	35
5.3 CAPACITY OF STREETS	39
5.4 TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEMS	42
5.5 ACCIDENTS AND SAFETY	42
5.6 PAVEMENT & SIDEWALK CONDITION	43
5.7 DOWNTOWN PARKING ANALYSIS	44
5.8 TRAFFIC PATTERNS	51
6.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/EMPLOYMENT.....	52
6.1 LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS IN LOWELL	52
6.2. LABOR FORCE	53
6.3. AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGES	53
6.4. EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY DIVISION.....	54
6.5 TOP EMPLOYERS IN THE CITY	58
6.6. MAJOR INVESTMENTS & DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.....	59
6.7 SUPPLY OF OFFICE AND RETAIL SPACE IN DOWNTOWN LOWELL	66
6.8 MUNICIPAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS AND TAXES	69
7.0 HOUSING	72
7.1 AGE OF HOUSING STOCK	73
7.2 HOUSING MARKET CONDITIONS	74
7.3 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY	75
7.4 SUBSIDIZED AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING	77
7.5 EXPIRING USE	79
8.0 PARKS, RECREATION, & OPEN SPACE.....	81
8.1 PUBLIC CONSERVATION AND RECREATION RESOURCES	81
8.2 NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	82
8.3 PUBLIC CONSERVATION AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES BY NEIGHBORHOOD	83
8.4 STATE-OWNED LAND	90

8.5 NON-PROFIT LANDS.....	90
8.6 OTHER PUBLIC, UNPROTECTED LANDS.....	90
8.7 PRIVATE RECREATION LANDS.....	91
8.8 MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL HOLDINGS.....	91
9.0 ENVIRONMENT & CONSERVATION	92
9.1 GEOLOGY, SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY	92
9.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER.....	92
9.3 SURFACE WATER	92
9.4 FLOOD HAZARD AREAS.....	93
9.5 WETLANDS.....	94
9.6 WATERSHEDS.....	95
9.7 WILDLIFE INVENTORY	95
9.8 WILDLIFE CORRIDORS	95
9.9 SCENIC LANDSCAPES.....	95
9.10 HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES	96
9.11 LANDFILLS	96
9.12 CHRONIC FLOODING	97
9.13 GROUND AND SURFACE WATER POLLUTION	97
10.0 ARTS, CULTURE, & HISTORIC PRESERVATION.....	99
10.1 CULTURAL AND HISTORIC AREAS.....	99
10.2 DOWNTOWN LOWELL ARTISTS DISTRICT.....	99
10.3 HISTORIC PRESERVATION	100
10.4 MUSEUMS, THEATERS, AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS.....	102
11.0 MUNICIPAL FACILITIES & PUBLIC SAFETY	103
11.1 LOWELL FIRE DEPARTMENT	103
11.2 LOWELL POLICE DEPARTMENT	104
11.3 ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS.....	105
11.4 OTHER MUNICIPAL FACILITIES	106
11.5 HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CARE.....	107
12.0 UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE.....	108
12.1 WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM.....	108
12.2 SEWAGE SERVICE	108
12.3 COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW	109
12.4 PRIVATE UTILITIES	110
13.0 PUBLIC OPINION/INPUT.....	111
13.1 PHASE I: ASSEMBLY AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING MATERIALS.....	111
13.2 PHASE II: DATA COLLECTION.....	113
13.3 PHASE III: ANALYSIS OF DATA	115
13.4 PHASE IV: TESTING OF DRAFT PLAN STRATEGIES.....	115
13.5 COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.....	116
13.6 PUBLIC MEETINGS & FORUMS.....	116
13.7 ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS	116
CREDITS	128